

Department of Historic Resources

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**25 PROPERTIES NAMED TO VIRGINIA LANDMARKS REGISTER AND
6 NEW HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKERS APPROVED**

RICHMOND, Va.— A simple chapel that once served a rural Shenandoah Valley community of African Americans after the Civil War and a grand memorial to Robert E. Lee in Richmond were among the 25 properties added to the Virginia Landmarks Register this week by the Department of Historic Resources.

Longs Chapel, located in the former community of Zenda in eastern Rockingham County, is a one-story frame building built around 1871 for use as a church and schoolhouse by former slaves who settled the community on land deeded them by a white landowner and the Brethren Church.

The clapboard chapel, with a nearby graveyard, was neglected and covered in overgrowth for decades until recent reclamation efforts initiated plans to convert the structure into a museum focusing on African American history in the central Shenandoah Valley.

Two other properties associated with African American history added to the state register are Pocahontas Island Historic District in Petersburg, which evolved into a significant free-black commercial and residential center in the decades before the Civil War, and Mount Sinai Baptist Church in Suffolk, founded in 1867 under the leadership of a former slave.

The Robert E. Lee statue, unveiled in May of 1890, was the first memorial erected along Richmond's renowned Monument Avenue, so named for its series of traffic circles featuring statues of Confederate leaders Jefferson Davis, Jeb Stuart, and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.

Representing the cult of the "Lost Cause of the Confederacy" that arose in the decades after the Civil War and the emergence of a new south after Reconstruction, the statue of Lee astride his head-bowed horse was created by French academic sculptor Jean Mercie and placed on a monumental pedestal designed by the French architect Paul Pujol.

The only statue on Monument Avenue owned by the state and now undergoing repair and cleaning, the Lee statue was nominated to the state register by the Department of Historic Resources in preparation for the 200th anniversary of Lee's birth in 2007.

The following is a complete listing of the properties or boundary increases that were added to the state register by the two advisory boards of the Department of Historic Resources. The properties are grouped by DHR's regional district offices:

In the capital (Richmond) and central piedmont region:

- Carver Residential Historic District (Boundary Increase), Richmond
- Robert E. Lee Statue, Richmond
- Manchester Residential and Commercial Historic District, Richmond
- Pocahontas Island Historic District, Petersburg
- Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Resources at Bermuda Hundred, Chesterfield County
- Town of Bermuda Hundred Historic District, Chesterfield County
- Dale's Pale Archaeological District, Chesterfield County

In the Roanoke and southwest region:

- Pleasant View, Bedford County

In the Tidewater region:

- Makemie Monument Park, Accomack County
- Marriott School, King and Queen County
- Mount Sinai Baptist Church, Suffolk
- Phoebus Historic District, Hampton
- Robert Tynes House, Isle of Wight County
- Whitehall Tavern, James City County
- Willowdale, Accomack County

In the Northern Virginia and Shenandoah Valley region:

- George Chrisman House, Rockingham County
- John Gunnell House, Fairfax County
- Homestead Dairy Barns, Bath County
- Kite Mansion, Rockingham County
- Longs Chapel, Rockingham County
- Locust Grove, Loudoun County
- Maury School, Fredericksburg
- Sleepy Hollow Farm, Loudoun County
- Temple Hall, Loudoun County
- The Yard, Bath County

The Department of Historic Resources will now nominate these state-register properties for listing on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service.

Photographs and detailed information about each of property is available on the DHR website at (http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/homepage_features/board_activities.htm).

Listing a VLR places no restrictions on property owners, although the recognition allows owners to receive technical assistance from the DHR or pursue state and federal rehabilitation tax-credit incentives and programs. Listing on the state and national registers has spurred economic revitalization efforts in many historic districts throughout the state.

For a property or resource to be VLR-listed, it must meet important historic criteria. It can do so through association with significant historical events or persons, or through possession of outstanding archaeological or architectural features.

Highway Markers

In addition to the register properties above, the following six highway markers were approved by the Historic Resources Board for installation along Virginia roadways:

- “Pvt. Benjamin B. Levy,” in Glendale (Charles City County), commemorating one of the first Jews to receive a Medal of Honor for military service and heroism during the Civil War;
- “Charles Fenton Mercer,” in Leesburg, honoring a prominent Loudoun County attorney who served in the Virginia House of Delegates (1810-1817) and the U.S. Congress (1817-1839);
- “Point of Honor,” in Lynchburg, recognizing the original 1815-house and 900-acre plantation owned by Dr. George Cabell Sr. that is now a house museum;
- “Loudoun Heights Clash,” in Loudoun County, recalling a battle on January 10, 1864 between the forces of Union Maj. Henry A. Cole and Confederate Maj. John S. Mosby;
- “Fearnought,” in Emporia, discussing the famous colonial-era Thoroughbred racehorse Fearnought;
- “Carter Hall,” in Clarke County, highlighting this estate established in the mid-1790s by Col. Nathaniel Burwell, great-grandson of Robert “King” Carter.

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Additional information: PDFs of the register nomination forms and photographs of each property or historic district cited below are available on the DHR Website at http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/homepage_features/board_activities.htm